



Trade and Development Seminar

Seasonality of Food Insecurity in Rural Zambia

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10:30am – 12:00pm

119 Ruttan Hall

Using three years of weekly household panel data in rural Zambia, this paper addresses whether and how farmers smooth their consumption from season to season, as well as from year to year. Given seasonal price changes of the staple food, maize, some farmers buy it when prices are low and store it for the hunger season, while others run out of the staple food before the next harvest, and so buy it when prices are high. Results indicate that the former group successfully smooths its consumption from season to season, as well as from year to year, while the latter group reduces consumption throughout the year in response to negative harvest shocks. The latter group reduces its food diversity to maintain consumption of the staple food in the hunger season in spite of its seasonal price hike in that season.